

Terry Slatten terryslatten@yahoo.com

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Doug Fortner,

Sorry I couldn't get back to you sooner.

Randi and I have attempted to follow the Planning Commission's recent meetings on redevelopment of the old paper mill site on Chambers Bay, though unfortunately, we missed November's session, which may have given us upfront a clearer vision of what is on the table.

In light of the concerns raised by Planning Commission members, I wonder if they have been given a copy of the March 2019 study done by Anchor QEA, entitled "Chambers Creek Dam Removal and Estuary Restoration." I got a copy from the Town almost two years ago, which I read then. Although the study focuses on estuary and salmon restoration and offers different alternatives to reach that goal, it does also look at a number of other issues which Commission members have raised, like road, bridge and transportation problems in the area. It also provides an interesting history of past development on Chambers Bay. (If I recall correctly, the third alternative of the study would turn the Abitibi back into an estuary)

I am forwarding to you a copy of the study, and if the Planning Commissioners have not already received a copy of it, would you forward it to them, along with this note?

We also have a few questions.

Chambers Bay is a unique, beautiful, and a special area. Earlier, the paper and lumber mills did provide a number of jobs for families in the Steilacoom area, and I can remember from the 1950's & '60's that especially the paper mill was cited as an important financial contributor to both the Town and School District.

Obviously paper & lumber mills in that area are a thing of the past. Both operations extracted a heavy price on the environment. The area has fortunately been cleaned up significantly. I am curious, however, whether the Abitibi site was ever investigated as a hazardous waste site, either by the fed's or the state, and if so, has the area been since mitigated /or simply delisted after exploration?

There have also been comments over the difficulties building on fill, but has there been an actual study of the soils at the site for future construction? The paper mill operated there for a number of years, and I would suspect that the gigantic machinery which ran required stability, as well as the buildings footings?

While the comp plan and zoning are apparently going to be revised, there has also been comment that the Town's shoreline plan is not going to be amended. At one point, development close to the shore of a water body emphasized water dependent or water related development or uses. Are those regulations still in existence? Would they create a problem for a developer, or would a setback simply suffice?

Town officials apparently concede that a mix of residential and limited commercial will not sustain the number of jobs (& revenue?) which once existed in the area or were called for in the industrial sections of the comp plan which are now going to be revised or deleted. What are the consequences? Is there a mandate that each municipality must sustain a particular number of jobs?

Finally, I was once told that the Town's population in 2014 was apparently less than that of 2004, which meant the Town had failed to meet GM's mandate for growth. Is this also going to be an issue in 2024? Is this one of the reasons why the creation of new housing is now being emphasized?

It seems to us, Planning Commission members have attempted to raise a number of legitimate issues. Seemingly, when one undertakes the revision of a comp plan, the impact on the entire Town must be thought through. That seems more difficult when revisions are directly linked to a specific development... Should these changes have been put on the table a decade ago, before a specific development was being targeted?

Let me add that I'm not at all opposed to the concept of mixed commercial/residential. It seems like a number of jurisdictions have moved in that direction. We need to look no further than Ruston...

Would you send me a quick note if I get this through to you? I'm going to attempt to send this and the study separately. I'm afraid I'm not a techie!